



Voting Information News

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"To Do" This Month:

☒ Plan your Armed Forces Voters Week (Sep. 3-9) activities. Get the whole community involved and aim for 100% contact.

☒ Contact your local commissary and exchange and organize voter outreach activities starting with AFVW and through October 15 (last day of Absentee Voters Week).

☒ Use local resources such as Commander's bulletins, newspapers, radio and television stations to help you get the word out about voting. Post motivational posters on bulletin boards in offices, commissaries and exchanges.

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A roundup of voting news from the Federal Voting Assistance Program (FVAP) for voters, potential voters and those who assist voters.

Have you submitted your Federal Post Card Application (FPCA) for your absentee ballot?

Many states require the FPCA to be received by the local election official 30 days prior to the election. For those states requiring the request 30 days in advance, the FPCA must be received by October 6, 2006. Consult the 2006-07 VAG or the FVAP website at www.fvap.gov/services/fpca.html.

Absentee Voting Week - October 8 to 14, 2006

FVAP has designated October 8 to October 14, 2006 as Absentee Voting Week. During this time, VAOs are asked to announce, through various media, that voters should return their voted ballot immediately upon receiving it.

Help dispel the myth that overseas and military absentee votes do not count! All properly executed ballots are counted.

If absent Uniformed Service voters and overseas citizens have not received their regular state ballot by Absentee Voting Week, then they should use the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB). For guidance on completing the FWAB and requirements for using the FWAB, read the articles in this issue. Page 21 of the 2006-07 Voting Assistance Guide contains additional information (available at www.fvap.gov). ☒

If your regular state absentee ballot does not arrive in time, use The Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot

What exactly is the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB)? What purpose does it serve and where is it available? When can it be used and who can use it? Read on for these answers and more...

The most common barrier that citizens covered under the *Uniformed and Overseas Citizens Absentee Voting Act* (UOCAVA) encounter when voting absentee is insufficient ballot transit time. Many citizens are located in remote areas around the world where mail is not delivered or picked up on a regular basis (such as sailors and marines aboard ship,

and Peace Corps workers, missionaries, airmen, sailors and soldiers at remote sites).

The FWAB is pre-positioned overseas as a "back-up" ballot should a citizen not receive his or her regular ballot from the state or territory in enough time to meet state deadlines for counting (see Suggestions article on next page).

Under Federal provisions, a U.S. citizen may use the Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot to vote for Federal offices in the General Election if that citizen meets all

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Share your good ideas! Send your good ideas and lessons learned to your Department of State or Service Voting Action Officer.
(Contact information on page 3)

"To Do" This Month

(continued):

☑ Take an inventory to ensure that you have adequate supplies of absentee voting materials (make sure that you have an ample supply of Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot (FWAB, SF-186) for UOCAVA voters.

☑ Visit the FVAP's website frequently for up-to-date, on-line information and resources from the Program as well as links to other sites of interest in carrying out your duties as a VAO. The FVAP is continually updating the website: www.fvap.gov.

NOTE: The appearance of external hyperlinks does not constitute endorsement by the United States Federal Government, United States Department of Defense or the Federal Voting Assistance Program of the linked web sites, or the information, products or services contained therein. The Federal Voting Assistance Program does not exercise any editorial control over the information you may find at these locations.

three of the following conditions:

1. The citizen must be either an absent Uniformed Services voter absent from his/her voting residence or be a citizen outside the U.S. including APO/FPO.

2. The citizen must make a timely ballot request, and submit the FPCA or other state accepted form to their state of legal voting residence requesting a state absentee ballot. The appropriate Local Election Official receives their request at least 30 days before the election. (This year the FPCA must be

received on or before October 6th for the 2006 General Election), and

3. The citizen has not received the regular state absentee ballot.

In summary, the FWAB is an emergency ballot, only valid when a U.S. citizen makes a timely ballot request for the General Election; is an absent Uniformed Service voter away from his/her voting residence or a citizen located outside the U.S. including APO/FPO and the requested absentee ballot has not been received from the state or territory. ☑

How To Use The FWAB

If eligible to use this ballot, the citizen may indicate their election choices for Federal offices in the general election. To vote this blank write-in ballot, citizens may vote for a candidate by writing in the candidate's name or writing in the name of a party affiliation (if the intention of a voter can be ascertained then, the candidate/party choices will be accepted). The FWAB is similar to the regular state absentee ballot as it includes a security envelope and a mailing envelope.

Complete the voter's declaration/affirmation according to the instruction on the front cover sheet, sign, date and include witness if needed by your state. Vote the official Federal Write-In ballot by writing in the candidate's name or political party designation. Some states permit you to vote for other offices in the space provided. Place only the voted ballot in the security envelope and seal.

FWABs are available worldwide at U.S. embassies and consulates, military installations and overseas organizations

and corporations with U.S. citizens.

Currently, the FWAB is prescribed by Federal law for use in general elections for Federal offices only. During the 2004 elections, on an ad hoc basis, some states and jurisdictions expanded its use for primary elections. Eleven states have legislatively expanded its use beyond the Federal law to include use in elections other than general elections and/or voting for offices other than Federal offices – Colorado, Connecticut, Iowa, Maryland, Montana, Nebraska, Oklahoma, Rhode Island, Texas, Virginia and West Virginia.

Military and overseas citizens should use the FWAB when the election is rapidly approaching and insufficient time exists for you to receive, vote and timely return your requested state ballot.

A sample FWAB with instructions can be found in Chapter 2 of the *Guide*. Chapter 3 provides state-specific instructions regarding proper use of the FWAB.

Revision 2005 of the FWAB is available, however, the 1995 version can still be used. ☑

SUGGESTIONS For Submitting The FWAB

We recommend that overseas citizens who have not received their regular state absentee ballot by the 25th day before the election (October 13, 2006), complete and submit the FWAB to their state local election official if they have met each of the requirements above. This will help to ensure timely receipt of their absentee

ballot for Federal offices. The FWAB must be received by the local election official not later than the deadline for receipt of regular state absentee ballots for that election under state or territory law.

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Citizens who receive their regular state absentee ballot after submitting the FWAB should vote and return the ballot immediately. Reason: If a citizen's regular state absentee ballot also arrives by the deadline for receipt of absentee ballots, generally, the state will count the regular state absentee ballot instead of the FWAB, as it will include non-Federal offices.

Citizens should carefully review the FWAB before submission to ensure that the absentee ballot complies with state's guidelines, instructions and requirements. Citizens should make sure that they are submitting the FWAB to the correct jurisdiction. Refer to Chapter 3, Section III (Where to Send It) of the 2006-07 Voting

Assistance Guide. Sign and date the ballot return envelope and obtain a notary/witness signature if the state requires it.

Make sure that you are subscribed to the *Voting Information News (VIN)* via e-mail. Why? The FVAP may enter into an ad hoc agreement with the state, or take legal action to allow expanded use of the FWAB. The FVAP will then notify citizens regarding the use of the FWAB through the VIN, Voting News Releases and the FVAP website. We encourage you to always vote the regular ballot regardless of its receipt date because a state may allow late counting of these ballots from overseas citizens. ☑

KNOW THE DIFFERENCE!

The Federal Write-in Absentee Ballot and The State Special Write-In Absentee Ballot

Several states provide a State Special Write-In Absentee Ballot for citizens who are unable to use regular state absentee voting procedures (submariners, citizens in isolated areas). This **State Special Write-In Absentee Ballot** should not be confused with the **Federal Write-In Absentee Ballot**. Federal law prescribes eligibility requirements for FWAB use. State laws prescribe requirements for State Special ballot use.

As of the date of this publication, the following states provide a special write-in ballot: Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut*, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Iowa, Louisiana, Maine, Missouri, Nebraska, New Hampshire, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin.

State-specific instructions regarding proper use of State Special ballots are provided in Chapter 3 of the 2006-07 Voting Assistance Guide.

*Note: The State of Connecticut is not required by Federal law to accept the FWAB, though in 1996 it began accepting it in regular elections for Federal offices. In addition, a Special State Write-In Ballot is available 90 days before an election to members of the Armed Forces and dependents accompanying them, who, due to military contingencies, are unable to use regular absentee voting procedures. ☑

Reasons Why the FWAB May Not Be Counted

- The FWAB may not be counted if it is submitted from citizens located within the United States, except for Uniformed Services voters (including dependents.)
- The FWAB may not be counted if the citizen did not make a timely request for a state absentee ballot (request must be received by your local election office on or before October 6, 2006 for the General Election).

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Voting Action Officers

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https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/Active/TAGD/pssd/psb/votingindex.htm

U.S. Dept. of the Navy: LT David Truman **tel:** 1-866-U-ASK-NPC (827-5672) (select option 6 from menu),
fax: (901) 874-6825, **DSN fax:** 882-6825,
Email: vote@navy.mil, **http://www.cni.navy.mil/NavyVote/Index.html**

U.S. Dept. of the Air Force: Mr. John Lowrance **tel:** (210) 565-5000, **toll free:** 1-800 616-3775 (Select options 1, then 1, then 2 from menu), **DSN** 665-5000; **fax:** (210) 565-2543, **DSN fax:** 665-2543;
Email: afpc/dpsfvotingpgmdlist@randolph.af.mil;
http://www.afcrossroads.com/VoteFund/Vote/default.htm

U.S. Marine Corps: Mr. David E. James **tel:** (703) 784-9511, **DSN:** 278-9511; **fax:** (703) 784-9823,
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https://www.manpower.usmc.mil/pls/portal/url/page/m_ra_home/MR/Personnel/Voting

U.S. Coast Guard: LTJG Dan Owen **tel:** (202)-267-1709, **fax:** (202) 267-4823;
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Federal Voting Assistance Program

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20301-1155

PHONE:
(703) 588-1584
DSN 425-1584

FAX
(703) 696-1352
DSN 426-1352

VOTING INFORMATION
CENTER (VIC):
(703) 588-1343
DSN 425-1343

TOLL FREE (VIC and FVAP
staff member):
1-800-438-VOTE (8683)

Visit our website for
international toll-free phone
and fax numbers.

EMAIL:
vote@fvap.ncr.gov

Comments or suggestions on
this newsletter are welcome.

Website:
www.fvap.gov

Vote!

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- The FWAB may not be counted if it is not received by the local election official by the state deadline for counting.
- The FWAB will not be counted if the Voter Declaration/Affirmation is not signed and dated, and the required witness or notary signatures are not included (see state instructions of the *Guide*).
- The FWAB will not be counted if the state also receives a properly cast regular state absentee ballot from the voter by the state deadline for counting. ☒

Pennsylvania Ballot Return Deadline Changed

Pennsylvania has revised the deadline by which absentee ballots must be received. A voted ballot envelope must be postmarked not later than the day before the election. The voted ballot must be received at the County Board of Elections by the seventh day following an election. Previously, the voted ballot must have been received by the election office by 5:00 p.m. on the Friday before the election.

Get Out The Vote Program



The 2006 *Get Out the Vote* campaign has just been released. *Pay Attention & Vote* consists of television and radio Public Service Announcements (PSAs) and the payattention.org website with unlikely candidates such as "Tacky Ceramic Rooster," "Bag of Leaves," "Old Relish Packet" and "Spoiled Yappy Dog." All of the use of inanimate objects as political candidates, there is a serious side to the campaign. It emphasizes the importance of registering and voting during the midterms, elections that historically result in low young voter turnout.

We encourage Voting Assistance Officers to utilize the *Get Out the Vote* campaign and PSAs. They can be an excellent resource when planning voter registration drives and other voter outreach efforts to help encourage participation. ☒

Moving? Send an FPCA to notify your local election official. Also, send us an email so that you and your replacement can continue receiving this *newsletter*.

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